

Message Text

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E O 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, RP

SUBJ: DE LA TORRE CASE

1. MILITARY COURT ANNOUNCED JANUARY 5 THAT TRIAL OF FATHER EDICIO DE LA TORRE AND 17 OTHERS ON REBELLION CHARGES NOW SET FOR JANUARY 28. LATEST POSTPONEMENT ALLOWED DEFENSE COUNSEL SENATOR DIOKNO TO FILE PETITION FOR MANDAMUS AND HABEAS CORPUS BEFORE SUPREME COURT WHILE EXPECTED HEAR ARGUMENTS THURSDAY, JANUARY 8. DIOKNO TOLD AP HE EXPECTED SC WOULD DECIDE (A) WHETHER DE LA TORRE ET AL SHOULD HAVE BAIL (B) CHARGES SHOULD BE QUASHED AND (C) INDIVIDUALS IN GROUPS SHOULD HAVE SEPARATE TRIALS. THURSDAY'S HEARING WILL BE FIRST PRESIDED OVER BY NEW CHIEF JUSTICE FRED RUIZ CASTRO, SWORN IN BY PRESIDENT MARCOS JANUARY 5. COMMENT: DE LA TORRE CASE HAS BEEN PENDING SINCE LATE 1974. PUBLIC AND EVEN CHURCH'S INTEREST IN CASE HAS BEEN FITFUL ALTHOUGH WE NOTE US BASED PHILIPPINE NEWS WAS TO HAVE CARRIED FEATURE ON DE LA TORRE IN ITS DECEMBER 20-27TH ISSUE. THIS WILL BE SUPREME COURT'S FIRST POLITICALLY SENSITIVE CASE IN 1976. WHAT IT DECIDES AND ATTENTION CASE RECEIVES (OR DOES NOT RECEIVE) IN GUIDED PRESS COULD SUGGEST DIRECTION GOVERNMENT MAY DECIDE TO TAKE ON DETAINEE ISSUE OVER YEAR.

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